

What is Zika virus disease (Zika)?

Zika is a disease caused by Zika virus that is spread to people primarily through the bite of an infected *Aedes* species mosquito. There is also evidence that once contracted, Zika can also be transmitted through sexual contact. It can also be transmitted from a pregnant mother to her unborn child during pregnancy.

What are the symptoms of Zika?

The most common symptoms of Zika are fever, rash, joint pain, and conjunctivitis (red eyes). The illness is usually mild with symptoms lasting for several days to a week. People usually don't get sick enough to go to the hospital, and they very rarely die of Zika.

What countries have Zika?

Visit this link to see the most up to date listing of countries with Zika outbreak:

<http://www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/active-countries.html>

What are the greatest risks associated with the Zika virus?

There have been reports of a serious birth defect of the brain called microcephaly (a condition in which a baby's head is smaller than expected when compared to babies of the same sex and age) and other poor pregnancy outcomes in babies of mothers who were infected with Zika virus while pregnant.

Therefore, if there is any chance of pregnancy, it is recommended that you do not travel to a Zika-affected country.

If you have traveled to a Zika-affected country, there is a chance you could transmit the virus through sexual contact after returning. Consider abstaining from intercourse to avoid further transmission.

There have been an increased number of people affected with Guillain-Barré (GBS) syndrome in Brazil. There may be a correlation between Zika and GBS. GBS is a rare disorder where a person's own immune system damages the nerve cells, causing muscle weakness and sometimes, paralysis. These symptoms can last a few weeks or several months. While most people fully recover from GBS, some people have permanent damage and in rare cases, people have died.

What can I do to prevent becoming infected with Zika?

There is no vaccine to prevent Zika. The best way to prevent diseases spread by mosquitoes is to protect yourself from mosquito bites. Here's how:

- Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- Use insect repellents.

- Reapply insect repellent as directed.
- If you are also using sunscreen, apply sunscreen before applying insect repellent.
- Treat clothing and gear with permethrin or buy permethrin-treated items.
- Sleep under a mosquito bed net if you are overseas or outside and are not able to protect yourself from mosquito bites.

What is the treatment for Zika?

There is no vaccine or specific medicine to treat Zika virus infections.

If you are sick and have recently traveled to a Zika-affected country, schedule an appointment at the Engle Center to be evaluated further.

Treat the symptoms:

- Get plenty of rest.
- Drink fluids to prevent dehydration.
- Take medicine such as acetaminophen to reduce fever and pain.
- Do not take aspirin or other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs.
- If you are taking medicine for another medical condition, talk to your healthcare provider before taking additional medication.